

Connecting Redmond Roundtables Regional Connections Group

Key Results:

Definition:

- Great regional connectivity:
 - Is Predictable, Reliable, Frequent, Efficient, , Comfortable and Safe
 - Provides real, effective choices that eliminates the need for an automobile
 - Is environmentally responsible, multimodal
 - Connects a network of 'places' – near and far - from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m.
 - Moves both goods and people
 - Provides a real option for all trips for all ages, including occasional and recreational trips.

Top Recommendations:

1. Take purposeful, consistent action to connect Redmond to region

- Refine and market Redmond's vision of regional connectivity, consistently and continually, to public, business and regional officials
- Agree upon the places to be connected; let best technology follow
- Play a major role in shaping the regional high capacity system that is currently being planned for expansion
- Make Redmond's voice heard in all regional transportation discussions that potentially connect Redmond to the region
- Citizens play a leadership role; eg activist groups, a Redmond Transportation Commission

2. Pursue low cost techniques to improve the existing regional system

Transit and Carpools

- On demand systems
- Reduce incentives to drive (don't require 'minimum parking' ratios)
- Create centers, density, to attract transit
- All day express service
- Fare free transit system as incentive
- Easier to buy bus passes, maps to find routes
- Advertise service and routes
- Readerboards showing next scheduled bus
- Easier to link up with daily carpools
- Cab like services for to get to/from transit

Roads and Sidewalks

- Address missing links, signal timing, choke points to make system work
- Sky bridges and tunnels, pedestrian corridors through buildings
- Improve walking, awnings on buildings and in parking lots
- Automatic walk lights at traffic lights, don't have to push button
- Pedestrian flags, in street flashing lights
- Promote driver awareness of safety for all modes
- Pricing considered for busy routes

Other Ideas

- Safety education for bikers and walkers
- Finish bike lanes to link Redmond to Seattle
- Separate bike/ped/car traffic on busy routes

Background Notes – Regional Connections Roundtable

I. February 26, 2004 Discussion Notes

Definition:

- Great regional connectivity would be:
 - Predictable, Reliable, Frequent, Efficient, Provide real, effective choices
 - Environmentally responsible
 - Comfortable and safe
 - Connecting a network of places – near and far - from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m.
 - Multimodal – modal diversity
 - Move goods and people
 - Be a workable choice before an auto is purchased

Top Four Opportunities:

1. Agree on a plan to connect Redmond to region; include innovations; market to region and public
2. Pursue low cost efficiencies to improve existing system
3. Guide/influence current work on fixed guideway planning
4. Pursue all day express bus service
5. No minimum parking ratio

Top Four Barriers:

1. No agreement on HOV versus fixed guideway
2. Money
3. Cars more convenient, inertia blocks change
4. Not enough dense residential areas and employment places
5. No regional body with overall transportation authority

Group Brainstorm on:

Definition of Regional Connections:

- To and from Redmond
- Through Redmond
- To work centers, recreation places
- Seattle and Eastside connections
- What's the region
- Moving persons, goods
- Region as a community or a constellation
- Where should we be able to connect to conveniently

Top Opportunities:

- Fixed guideway planning happening now (3)
- Possibilities to improve system efficiency – missing links; signal coordination; address choke points; on demand transit (2)
- Marketing both the fixes and the plan -- study and advertise innovations (1)
- Agree on plan to connect Redmond to region (3)
- Present our choices to region (1)
- Set priorities and stick with them
- Potential strong local leadership on issue
- SR520 bike trail connected to Seattle trails – from Lowe’s west
- Enlist help of those who work here
- Stronger Eastside interest in having transit in the mix
- Rising fuel costs
- Raise sales tax on fuel
- Sense of “it’s not working”
- Leads to need to innovate new and different choices – excitement
- Specify “guarantees” in system, e.g., guaranteed longevity for a solution, guaranteed travel times
- Regional discussions of pricing
- Address ease of parking
- No minimum parking ratio (3)
- Don’t lose existing connections
- Use land use to create centers; density to make alternatives work
- All day express service (2)
- SR520 failure imminent; monorail can be added to SR520

Top Barriers:

- Money (3)
- Tim Eyman
- Voters who follow
- Self interest
- Sense of fairness
- Illogical tax system (1)
- Technical problems with light rail on hill and across lake (1)
- No agreement on HOV’s versus fixed guideway (4)
- Differences between organizations in region on solution
- No regional body with authority? ST? Metro? (2)
- Too many bodies
- Peanut butter solutions – spread benefits thin (1)
- Love affair with single-family detached
- Not enough dense residential areas and employment places (2)
- Right now, cars more convenient (2)
- Psychological barrier equals inertia (2)

- People can't see logical conclusion to trends
- Auto insurance by vehicle, not trip
- Combo of "sunk costs" (1)
- Hard to tax polluters, peak-hour travelers
- Majority will oppose measures that cost them something (1)

II. March 11, 2004 Discussion

Issues: What should be the primary goal of improved regional connections? Should it be convenient for people who want to work and live far apart? For recreation or occasional trips? So kids could take busses to school and events?

Low Cost Techniques

- Need to agree on a commitment to implement the vision we have now. Lack of a vision isn't the problem, it's doing something
- Consider fareless transit system as way to reduce external ties of single-occupancy vehicle-based system, and also to attract new riders
- Free service could lead to using transit (not perceived of as having value)
- Difficult to buy bus passes
- Target - commuter traffic ideal market for transit riders versus non work-related peak hour trips
- Target – people who want to go to events in Seattle after work
- Advertising transit service
- Can't find a transit system map for Metro routes on-line
- Enhancements: reader boards showing arrivals of busses
- Signal timing; tow trucks for incident management
- Commuter clubs – informal networks for riders to get rides in carpools, hitchhiking and prescreening riders
- Make it easy to link up with carpoolers going from point A to B – key is information about travel/trip availability
- Taxi companies as an alternative ride-sharing method – an emerging on-demand system – could be part of transportation club
- Sidewalks – fill in missing gaps
- Sky bridges? Tunnels? Pedestrian corridors through buildings -- 148/SR-520 bridge is a good opportunity
- Make walks better, have awnings across parking lots
- Automatic walk lights at traffic signals – make signals more sensitive to pedestrian movements
- Pedestrian flags
- Flashing lights in crosswalks
- Mid-street signs with pedestrian crossing symbol
- Experiment with pedestrian green light at signal
- Bike system

- Enforce traffic laws to get compliance by bikers not stopping at stop signs, sidewalk riders
- Finish bike lanes
- Getting police to enforce bike laws may be difficult
- Driver awareness and education of separate lanes for bikers and pedestrians and separation within lanes by speed
- Awareness/education of bikers

Planning for Connecting Redmond to Region

- Take purposeful action to make regional transportation planning and projects work by City of Redmond
- Action is broad range of strategies and projects across all modes
- Get beyond the long time it takes to do anything
- Work to get routes and alignments set, then decide on bicycles type, besides busses
- We have ability to see problem, but not the way to do something specific, i.e., busses on freeways – service expanded to be like HCT
- Governments slow to act, citizens take up banner to do something
- Redmond transportation commission could take leadership role; emphasis to do something – could be umbrella for a lot of committees
- Need to know strongly what Redmond wants before being able to influence transportation decisions. Need continuity, ability to count on the plan for the future

First Aspects of Plan?

- Fixed guideway transit like light rail
- What kind of transportation system to have; which points get connected (we're going back and forth on these two questions)
- Political decision is points connected; then administrative decision is what kind of technical solutions best implement that policy
- How do we develop a strategy to move forward?
- Phase 2 of Sound Transit: a critical transportation issue for Redmond
- Write letters to elected officials; lobby
- Web surveys; polls to find out what people think
- Long-term predictability of what transportation system will be